

“Lost and Found”

Sermon Notes

- **If we are truly God's children and heirs, we will share His passion for seeking and restoring lost people. In the parable of the prodigal son, Jesus illustrates this principle from the perspective of...**

1. ...the conscientious father whose soul is filled with
_____ (vv. 1-10)

2. ...the rebellious prodigal son whose pride is emptied in
_____ (vv. 11-24)

3. ...the upright older brother whose heart is hardened in
_____ (vv. 25-31)

MEFC Community Group Study Questions
For the week of June 24th - 30th

Getting Started

1. If you know Jesus, when was the last time you had an opportunity to share the gospel with someone who was far from Christ? Make sure everyone in the group has an opportunity to share.

Digging Deeper

2. In your own words, can you explain the message of the gospel in a minute or less? Try it. Have a few in the group give it a shot and others provide some feedback (if you're struggling to summarize the gospel in that amount of time, take a look at 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 (Paul does so in about 30 seconds!)).

Open Your Bible to Luke 15:1-32...

3. Take a look at vv.1-2. Describe the setting for this celebrated chapter of the Bible. Who is Jesus' audience? Why does this matter?

4. Read briefly through vv.3-7, 8-10 and 11-32. What common themes do you notice that run through all three of these stories? Can you name 2 or 3?

5. Jesus takes it for granted that a good shepherd would leave 99 in order to pursue only 1 lost sheep (v.4). Does this surprise you? Does this strike you as a wise use of time or resources? How ought this to impact our posture toward those who are 'missing in action' in our church fellowship?

6. In vv.7 and 10, Jesus tells us of "joy in heaven" and "joy before the angels of God" on the occasion of the conversion of a single person to saving faith. Dream a bit together as a group about what this must look like. If you're a believer, have you ever thought about the fact that such a celebration was once thrown upon *your* conversion? How does this make you feel?

7. Do you have any prodigals in your life (vv.11-24)? If so, how does this parable sound familiar to you? On the other hand, how does it bring you hope?

8. Compare the attitude of the elder brother (vv.24-32) with that of Jonah in Jonah 4:1-11. What commonalities do you notice? Like Jonah, have you ever displayed the symptoms of E.B.S. (Elder Brother Syndrome)? What are some practical ways we can guard against this sort of hardness of heart?

9. Conclude your time together as a group by praying for the folks on each of your 'Lists of 5' by name, encouraging one another in some simple next steps toward the lost people in your life in the summer ahead.